

"I am only one. But still, I am one": Encouragement and Empowerment for Caregivers

A presentation about the prevention of burnout through participation in advocacy

by Anne Wrotniewski

OUTLINE

(Items in parentheses indicate further interaction with attendees when there is ample time)

- 1) Introduction
 - a) Strengths of caregivers (examples of positive experiences of caregiving)
 - b) Brief explanation of burnout and factors leading to it
 - i) The big picture of Alzheimer's Disease
- 2) Policy as a determinant of how Alzheimer's or dementia affects our lives
 - a) Parable about Policy: River rescue *(How did it make you feel?...What would you do?)*
 - i) Sources of a caregiver's problems:
 - (1) Dementia itself *(reflect briefly on specific impacts in caregivers' lives)*
 - (2) Policy that affects *how dementia impacts* our lives
 - b) Explanation of Policy
 - i) Simple definition
 - ii) Examples
 - (1) Federal
 - (2) State
 - (a) Recent losses because of policy decisions
- 3) *Positive* perspective on policy
 - a) Recent successes of dementia policy
 - b) Likelihood of future success for policies endorsing research, planning, and services for dementia
 - c) Hope in research
- 4) Advocacy as a caregiver's way to combat the *sources* of their problems: dementia and policy
 - a) Simple definition of advocacy
 - b) Examples *(Explanation of pictures, invitation to individuals to share their experiences in advocacy)*
 - i) *(Attendees' experiences in advocacy at various levels)*
- 5) Benefits
 - a) Outcomes in policy:
 - i) More funding for research
 - ii) Better care
 - iii) Planning
 - b) Encouragement: Working together
 - c) Empowerment: No matter what, there is some victory over the problems.
 - i) Indirect effects: *even if government policy doesn't change*, advocacy still has positive impact
 - d) Investment: Effort now > benefits for self & others in future
 - i) *(Imagine that dementia awareness and services were adequate...imagine a cure...)*
- 6) Advocacy Opportunities
- 7) Closing: Inspiration including *positive experiences of caregiver advocates*